

FIDEL PÉREZ MACAL

Email: fperezma@uwo.ca
Website: <https://sites.google.com/view/fidel-perez-macal>
London, Ontario, Canada

Research Interest

To understand how social or market structures, or technology acquisition affect development. With a focus on economics of education, empirical industrial organization, macroeconomics, and applied econometrics.

Education

Ph.D. in Economics, The University of Western Ontario, Canada (Expected completion: April 2019).
Thesis title: Language Barrier to Human Capital Development.
Committee: Salvador Navarro (Supervisor), Terry Sicular, and Lance Lochner.
M.A. in Economics, The University of Western Ontario, Canada, 2014.
M.A. in Applied Macroeconomics, The Pontifical Catholic University of Chile, 2009.
B.A. Mechanical Industrial Engineer, University of San Carlos of Guatemala, 2002.

Additional Certificates

Advanced Macroeconomic Forecasting, International Monetary Fund-CEMLA-Central Reserve Bank of Peru, 2012.
General Equilibrium Models at Central Banks, Central Bank of Guatemala, 2005.
Topics in Theory and Application of Monetary Policy, Central Bank of Guatemala, 2005.
Quantitative Methods in Economics, Rafael Landivar University - Central Bank of Guatemala, 2004.

Academic and Employment References

Dr. Salvador Navarro (Supervisor)
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
Canada
(+1) 519-661-2111 ext. 81586
Email: snavarr@uwo.ca

Dr. Terry Sicular
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
Canada
(+1) 519-661-2111 Ext. 85292
Email: sicular@uwo.ca

Dr. Lance Lochner
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
Canada
(+1) 519-661-2111 ext. 85281
Email: llochner@uwo.ca

Dr. Juan Carlos Castañeda
Economic Research Department
Central Bank of Guatemala
Guatemala
(502) 2429-6000 Ext. 3601
Email: jccf@banguat.gob.gt

Placement Director

Dr. Elizabeth Caucutt
Department of Economics
University of Western Ontario
(+1) 519-661-2111 Ext. 85235
Email: ecaucutt@uwo.ca

Research

Published

Assessment of models to forecast exchange rates: The Quetzal-U.S. dollar exchange rate. Castillo-Maldonado, Carlos; Pérez-Macal, Fidel (2013). Journal of Applied Economics. <https://EconPapers.repec.org/RePEc:cem:jaecon:v:16:y:2013:n:1:p:71-99>

Central bank's credibility and financial market access in a general equilibrium model with endogenous remittances: a Bayesian estimation for Guatemala. (Document in Spanish) Moran, Hilcias; Pérez-Macal, Fidel (2013). Banco de Guatemala. http://www.banguat.gob.gt/Publica/Investigaciones_Ec/Working%20Paper_No129.pdf

In progress

The root of Guatemalan students' language barrier: households' preferences for school attributes or spatial segregation. (Job Market Paper)

A learning barrier to a country's predominant language may affect human capital development. In Guatemala, students' linguistic sorting across schools is hindering non-Spanish mother tongue (SMT) students to learn the predominant language of instruction at schools, Spanish. This leads non-SMT students to poorly perform at schools. Relevant for Guatemala due to its high non-SMT population, this research identifies how school attributes, children's non-Spanish language use, and spatial segregation influence parents' school choice, and hence shaping students' linguistic sorting across schools. I do this by estimating a model of demand for junior high schools in Guatemala. The model features that parents consider schools as differentiated products, but also that this school differentiation depends on characteristics of other parents who select the same school in equilibrium. From the estimation, three main findings emerge. First, non-SMT parents prioritize their child's Spanish learning process when selecting schools. Second, non-SMT parents prefer to sort into schools where other parents have a similar mother tongue. Third, this last preference dominates the first for non-SMT parents whose home is not close to the Guatemalan capital city (spatial segregation). This leads to linguistic segregation at schools.

Are non-Spanish mother tongue students facing a language barrier in the Guatemalan education system?

Non-Spanish mother tongue (non-SMT) students' achievement on the Guatemalan national tests is poor. On average, non-SMT students' reading and math test scores are 0.6 and 0.4 standard deviations lower, respectively, than SMT students' test scores. This research analyzes how students' linguistic sorting across schools affect non-SMT students' Spanish comprehension given their non-Spanish language use, and therefore their educational achievement. I do this by using both a longitudinal dataset that represents the grade six students' 2010 cohort, and different estimation approaches such as two stage least squares, first difference, and local instrumental variables to explain test score gaps between SMT and non-SMT students. Three main findings emerge. First, students' linguistic sorting across schools is a prominent factor for students' non-Spanish language use. Second, non-SMT students who frequently speak their mother tongue are not yet proficient in Spanish. Lastly, students' non-Spanish language use explains about 70 percent of test score gaps between SMT and non-SMT students.

Work Experience

Economic Analyst in the Modelling Team, Central Bank of Guatemala, 2005 - 2013.

Main projects include: solving and estimation of a dynamic stochastic general equilibrium model, design and implementation of an interactive platform for policy analysis, and programs' design and maintenance for model forecasting.

Computer Skills

Matlab, Fortran, C++, Stata, Eviews, Dynare, Lyx, Latex

Languages

Spanish (native), English (proficient)